

# FEES (fiberoptic endoscopic evaluation of swallowing)

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## What is a FEES (fiberoptic endoscopic evaluation of swallowing)?

A FEES is a test used to check how well your child swallows. During the test, your child will eat and drink something. As your child swallows, a doctor and speech pathologist will look into your child's throat with an endoscope. An endoscope is a thin, flexible tube with a light and camera attached.

## What can I do to help prepare my child?

- Your child needs to be hungry for the test. Do not let them eat anything for 2 to 3 hours before the test.
- Tell the speech pathologist if your child has any allergies or if there are any foods or drinks that they have trouble swallowing.

## What will the test be like?

- Your child will be awake during the test. It most often takes about 10 to 15 minutes.
- The doctor will pass the tube through your child's nose. This will let the doctor and speech pathologist look at your child's throat as they swallow.
- The speech pathologist may ask you to help during the test. You may be asked to hold, feed or talk to your child.
- Your child will eat and drink things like applesauce, pudding, juice, milk and cookie.
  - The doctor and speech pathologist will be able to see if any food or drink goes into your child's airway.
  - You and your child will be able to watch what is happening on a monitor (screen).
- The doctor will then remove the tube from your child's nose.

## Are there any risks?

The most common risk is mild discomfort or pain. Other risks include:

- If your child has swallowing problems, there is a chance they may aspirate a small amount of food or drink.
  - Aspiration is when food or drink goes into the airway and lungs instead of going into the stomach.
  - The speech pathologist will work to reduce this risk during the test.
- Some children may gag when the tube goes through the nose. Rarely, this causes vomiting (throwing up).
- There is a small chance the tube may cause a nosebleed.

## What happens after the test?

- The doctor will talk with you about the results.
- The doctor and speech pathologist will work with you to choose the best feeding plan for your child.

**This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.**

**In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.**